



Committee for Family Forestlands Meeting Summary for January 22, 2025



Under public notice made by news release with statewide distribution, a meeting of the Committee for Family Forestlands [an advisory body to the Oregon Board of Forestry with authority established in Oregon Revised Statute 527.650] was convened on January 22, 2025, as a virtual online meeting. Meeting recordings constitute the official record.

CFF Committee members participating:

Wendy Gerlach, Citizen-At-Large (Voting)
Gary Jensen, Southern Oregon Landowner Rep. (Voting)
Kate McMichael, Landowner-At-Large Rep. (Voting)
Glenn Ahrens, OSU College of Forestry Ext. Ex-Officio
David Bugni, NW Landowner Rep. (Voting)
Kaola Swanson, Conservation Rep. (Voting)
Julie Woodward, OFRI Ex-Officio

ODF Staff attending:

Heather Hendersen, Budget Analyst
Mike Kroon, Deputy Chief – All Lands
Mirms Miller, Administrative Specialist
Jessie Ebert, SFO & Forest Health Manager
Derrick Wheeler, Legislative Coordinator
Aaron Mickey, SFO Training Specialist
Josh Hanson, OPA3
Joy Krawczyk, Public Affairs Director
Karen McGlone, Public Meetings & Event Specialist

Members not in attendance:

Amanda Sullivan-Astor, Forest Policy Manager AOL Ex-Officio
Maurizio Valerio, EO Landowner Rep. (Voting)

Guests/Public:

Theresa Hauser
Ben Deumling, Board of Forestry Member
Jake Ryan, Interfor Longview Division
Seth Barnes, Director of Forest Policy, Oregon Forest Industries Council
C.S. Counts

Chair Comments.

- Chair Gerlach calls the meeting to order.
- Asks for comments on the agenda/meeting minutes.
- Recognized a quorum was established.
- Ask for public comments.
- Moved on to Chair updates.

Division update.

- Mike Kroon provides division updates.

Small Forestland Owner Office Update.

- Jessie Ebert provides Small Forestland Owner Office update.
- Dave Bugni – Concern on the Oregon Department of Forestry mapping that lays out the streams, and that the mapping is inaccurate. Is there a way to interact with the appropriate folks so that information can get clarified in a timely manner?
 - Mike Kroon – Let your small forestland owner Forester know, Thomas Whittington is the one who will talk with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- Kaola Swanson – Is there a good way to track the articles or outreach? Can you subscribe to get these updates?
 - Jessie Ebert – Try and get these updates on the website. One of the goals of 2025 is to hopefully put together a newsletter people can subscribe to that will have all that information.

- Seth Barnes – Concerns on when the maps are updated. Any insight into the map on when it gets corrected for the water typing would be greatly appreciated to help with those concerns.
- Josh Hanson – I don't have the rules in front of me but there are some established timeframes when it comes to review of those. It's what's on the ground as far as how the rules are applied, so the maps may not quickly show corrections to some of these concerns, it is ultimately what is on the ground is what is used when prescribing and applying the rules.
- Kate McMichael – I think the issue ultimately will be what is the process that that on the ground truthing is straightforward and what is that process, how do you know it has been clarified.
- Wendy Gerlach – Do you get a sense of the amount of interest in alternative minimum option and the tax credit to the extent of everyone is going to want to use that or be rare?
 - Jessie Ebert – The minimum option is more popular, the tax credit not so much.
- Dave Bugni – A follow up to your question Wendy, I thought I heard a statistic that may be wrong, but I heard that about only 10% of those landowners chose the tax credit option. It might be worthwhile to study this issue a little bit to see what it would take to increase this number.
- Dave Bugni – If there is a way that we can take that the information provided by Jessie and distill it down to a short narrative to incorporate into our newsletters or websites that would be great. Maybe connect in order to accomplish this.
- Mike Kroon – One of my goals is to get people to recognize Jessie Ebert and Lori Bell as the Small Forestland Owner office so really trying to get that message out there.
- Josh Hanson – Speaking for SFISH if there is ever an opportunity to come and speak or provide information please don't hesitate to reach out to me.
- Glenn Ahrens – Is the Small Forestland Owner office fully staffed? What is your impression on where everyone is at and settling in? Is it pretty stable at this point?
 - Jessie Ebert – From our office standpoint we are fully staffed. Information provided about what the staff looks like.
 - Mike Kroon – For the districts we are working on trainings and such to help spread the knowledge on what is going on in the small forestland owner world. In the districts there is more of an issue getting people into those positions.
- Margaret Miller (in chat) - Should we distinguish between small forestland owner and Stewardship forester or should we just say Oregon Department of Forestry forester? Since both are trained and it does maybe add confusion?
 - Mike Kroon - Yes. I would just say Oregon Department of Forestry Forester.
- Dave Bugni – Just a quick follow up to what we were talking about with Jessie's stuff. It would be helpful if not already in there is for some of those bullet points if we could say list the bullet points and not only say "we are going to do this" but "also this matters to you because...". If there is something that really may be sounding obtuse it will help create the tie in.
- Julie Woodward – Love that you are doing the Partnership for Forestry Education because that will help also see those outreach opportunities. At Oregon Forest Resources Institute we have the opportunity to do an article, and we share that with all the Oregon Small Woodlands Association newsletters. I'd also reach out to anyone in your public relations department and maybe make it more of a human impact. If thinking about social media, maybe start highlighting Oregon Department of Forestry people, and who they are for the social media campaign to be able to put a face to who is doing the work for the public.
 - Jessie Ebert – With highlighting the people, would it be helpful to do both Salem and District staff and how their work impacts the landowners?
- Margaret Miller – I have been working with Katie Blauvelt and Jennifer, Nate, and other Oregon Department of Forestry contacts to update our "Know your Forests" page which is our Partnership for Forestry Education page

and I was just opening up the web copy and I realized I don't think we have a lot on SFISH so I was wondering Josh, if that might be a good place to put some information in there. I have a page on technical and financial assistance but we could add a blurb on SFISH.

- Josh Hanson – I would be happy to help with that.
- Kate McMichael – I think the more places people can access information that's helpful, we never know where it is that people do that initial connection.
- Wendy Gerlach – I'm wondering if I remember the SFISH rules right, but I had a question on the SFISH funding and the adequacy of the funding. I believe what happened in Washington State the demand for these projects exceeded the funding, so it was really important as the project really gets going have the funding align with the projects as they go forward. In terms of how much the projects that are coming now, is there an increase in volume of products and a way to track that to possibly avoid the backlog.
 - Josh Hanson – We had 10 million or so projects that would be eligible for funding but we only had the 6.5 million available so we are already exceeding the amount of money we have to fund these projects. For long term trends, will we get in as big a deficit as Washington State? I can only speculate and say that I wouldn't be surprised if we do.

Legislature Update.

- Derrick Wheeler provides an update on legislature and items that impact Small Forestland Owners.
- Kaola Swanson – Are there work groups currently working in the background to work on other funding sources or does that come after the legislation? Will that come later? Are there are organizations behind this that are helping to support Oregon Department of Forestry?
 - Derrick Wheeler – Yes, there are 35 groups together and we have been working behind the scenes on this. We will present, I believe next month. I will have to pull up the list of 35, it's called the fire 35. Can't get too deep on specifics as it is still being worked on.
- Mike Kroon – Is LRP and GDP being worked on as part of that group?
- Wendy Gerlach – Question around messaging around how fires start and fire prevention. Does what you are working on include messaging around these types of things? Are you thinking about changing messaging around that?
 - Derrick Wheeler – That is not within the legislative space, but would like to keep the pressure on it.
- Julie Woodward – Can you provide any update on the Board of Forestry and its funding?
 - Derrick Wheeler – Currently it's set at current service level, this is what goes to the legislature and it's up to them to craft any changes they feel necessary.
- Mike Kroon – When is the first cutoff date for when the first round of bills fall off?
 - Derrick Wheeler – April 9th is the cut off.
- Derrick Wheeler will send the Fire 35 information to Heather Hendersen.

Introduction and Discussion with Potential Industry Representative.

- Jake Ryan provides a brief overview of his background and interest with being on the committee.
- Wendy Gerlach provides a overview of what the committee does and how it works.
- Dave Bugni – Believe that Jakes perspective will be invaluable. Believe that his work with Interfor will be beneficial and that he comes with a good set of skills and background.
- Mike Kroon – One thing I keep hearing coming up is about the alternate markets that pop up, it would be interesting to get your take on that sometime and whether it can be a valuable market. Just as an example of things that may come up if you join the committee.

Impromptu Roundtable.

- Julie Woodward – The illustrated manual is at the printer, hope to have them at Tree School which is March 22nd. We are working closely with the Partnership of Forestry Education to update the “Know Your Forest” website.
- Margaret Miller (Video cut out, provided by email) – Working on The Digitally Unified Management Planning Project which aims to develop a user-friendly digital forest management planning tool that integrates geospatial data from LandMapper with user-defined objectives, supporting landowners in creating plans that range from basic to complex forestry requirements. The tool will feature logic-based questionnaires, location-specific data integration, management activity recommendations, and alters for relevant conservation programs.
- Dave Bugni – A big concern is you look at the demographics of those involved in this and all of us are over 50 or 60, so looking into getting people more involved on this really matters.
- Kate McMichael – The management planning tool, I think will be so helpful for folks. The first thing we were asked after the fire was, do you have a management plan. This is a key piece to being ready. Love that there can be a digital and physical copy.

Board of Forestry Update.

- Ben Deumling provides updates on the [Vision for Oregon’s Forests](#) and the Board of Forestry.
- Mike Kroon – The Forestry Plan for Oregon was the marching orders for Oregon Department of Forestry, when things came up it is what we went to for guidance. I assume this will work similarly to that.
- Kate McMichael – What is the plan for getting this out?
 - Ben Deumling - Joy will be on later to provide more information on this.
- Theresa Hauser – What is the expected lifespan of this?
 - Ben Deumling – The aspiration is that this will be revisited every 5 years.
- Wendy Gerlach – Seems like a bit of a shift in a way. The previous versions were longer and more implementation details, now seems more like a high level guide to work with Oregon Department of Forestry.
- Glenn Ahrens – To what extent was the HCP plan able to integrate some of the philosophy of what is in this vision? Or are they separate?
 - Ben Deumling – In many ways they are separate. We very clearly show this is a plan for all forests in Oregon and there are various layers of influence that the Board has on forestland. Where the HCP fits into that is primarily a strategy and tactic to meet some of the vision that is in this document.
- Julie Woodward – Since we know that 60% of that is Federal. Do you as a board have anything to help develop that relationship a little bit more with Federal to get them aware of the vision and communication lines?
 - Ben Deumling – No, I think the Board has struggled a little bit to find it’s footing but I do think that we have the ability to speak more loudly about our federal forests.
- Wendy Gerlach – I remember there being discussion on next steps. I remember there was something called metrics and incentives, I would think that if the strategic plan was following this wide view there would be some short statements about interaction with the feds and federal forests but then the meat would be within the jurisdiction of the department and then broken down to things like small landowners, different kinds of industrial lands, etc.
- Wendy Gerlach – I was glad you mentioned the Private Forest Accord and the Board seeking funding for implementing that just big picture. But also, that’s a component of this because the vision is very broad and I would think the strategic plan would be a priority.
- Dave Bugni – Wanted to mention that we have been learning and doing climate smart forestry for years, I was asked to do an article about this and giving people ideas of what they can do. If Oregon Department of Forestry could team up and work together with say Oregon Forest Resources Institute to get this information out as learn by doing examples, what landowners can do, etc. If we worked as a team to solidify what is really important that we would go a long way to getting this effort out.

- Dave Bugni – When talking about this you have to discuss who will be the head, this committee may be the perfect avenue for this to explore if it's us or someone else to weave all these agencies together to put forth a consistent reinforced and multi layered messaging. Seems like we should discuss at a future meeting how to make this happen.
- Julie Woodward – Just trying to help get those people on the ground the tools to get landowners to think about doing something is incredibly important due to the lack of landowner engagement. Want to just caution being too prescriptive, pull back to the big picture thing to what can we get a landowner to do? Different things will engage them.

Informing Small Forestland Owners.

- Joy Krawczyk provides information on outreach for Small Forestland Owners.
- Joy Krawczyk has an ask of providing information for any networks/touch points that folks are aware of to help assist in outreach efforts. Please send the information to Heather Hendersen and she will pass this along, can also pass along contact information for Joy and Karen.
- Kate McMichael – Did I hear that a part of this isn't just Oregon Department of Forestry information but also other organizations that act as a support structure?
- Dave Bugni – Other organizations to reach out to for those who participate is the basin councils. Do a lot with rural and urban forestland owners. A lot of cross over programs. The next would be local conservation districts. And for those that are unattached, what Glenn and other Oregon State University extension officers do, where they release their newsletters is an awesome approach. There would be something there to pursue. Thought of the same thing with the tax assessors office, there is one piece of literature everyone has to get, can't see why we can't create some sort of flier to put in there.
- Julie Woodward – Speaking on a social media campaign, many of us are a part of the Partnership for Forestry Education and Oregon Department of Forestry has several folks who attend that. We have a meeting coming up in February. The power of this group is you have multiple partners who are involved in it, so if you have a theme like reforestation this year we could all build social media to do it together with similar/same messaging. Get the providers who are out on the ground first.
- Kate McMichael – Can you advise on this dissemination of the Vision of Oregon's Forests?
 - Joy Krawczyk - Will be up on the Board of Forestry's website. Our initial focus because it does change for the first time in a long time the departments mission values, we've had a really robust roll out internally, getting folks familiar with it. Then there will be a broader push externally just to ensure our internal people know and understand it so that once it goes external they can provide answers.
- Margaret Miller (in chat) - Feel free to shoot me an email if anyone wants to join. miller@ofri.org
- Wendy Gerlach – Curious when you think about what you want to say if you have two sentences to say to people who are missing from the outreach, what would you say/how would you approach it?
 - Joy Krawczyk – The importance on Oregon's Forestlands and keeping them healthy and resilient, and the second part would be within the packet itself based on the information within it. Delivering that whole world information in a high level and digestible format.
- Kaola Swanson (in chat) - Topic I'd suggest is inviting Jeff Gersh who has been working on small forestland owner issues, possibly someone from The Nature Conservancy as well? USFS Community Forest Program presentation and FLP presentation, either from Oregon Department of Forestry staff or our federal partners.
- Julie Woodward – Remember this is an advisory group, we could be your first point of contact for feedback before sending things out to landowners.
- Dave Bugni – If there are 70,000 or so forestland owners in Oregon, it would be interesting to know how many unique hits Oregon Department of Forestry websites get vs. those that are already aware of the information, concerns that it may just be preaching to the choir. Think a lot of this effort may not be being maximized.

- Wendy Gerlach – Wanted to ask about the special assessment for Forestland, are most landowners aware of that? Or is this something that when they buy their forestland it's already in that assessment that continues? Seems like one way we may be able to reach people if they are applying for that deferral.
- Glenn Ahrens – As you may imagine, Oregon State University often has wrestled with the idea of reaching the ones we are not connected with, particularly the new forest owners or the unengaged. This opportunity to work through the assessment taxation is something we have explored. Most of the county assessors offices have somebody who specializes in farm forest assessment and communication with landowners and they are usually the ones who send people to Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State University for certain questions. It does very county by county, but they do often have personnel that are tuned in and listening and if we have a postcard or something that could be effective.
- Julie Woodward – Dave mentioned about effectiveness, there are some campaigns that have been done that you could look back on for effectiveness but things vary with county or area region. What we find most effective is when things link back to a person or group within their own community.
- Dave Bugni – One other suggestion especially for rural landowners, who are you going to talk to when you want to learn something? Likely your neighbor. Oregon State University Extension has done a great job of developing programs of Master Woodland Manager and Oregon Small Woodlands Association has their Good Neighbor Tours if there was a way to infuse more energy into those programs, not more money just more energy and help talk to people to get to people to go to where the information is. Also focus groups with people under the age of 60.

Discuss Upcoming Meeting Schedule and Agenda Topics.

- Kaola Swanson (in chat) - Topic I'd suggest is inviting Jeff Gersh who has been working on small forestland owner issues, possibly someone from The Nature Conservancy as well? US Forest Services Community Forest Program presentation and Forest Legacy Program presentation, either from Oregon Department of Forestry staff or our federal partners.
- Mike Kroon – Could have Lori's group come and talk for some of Kaola's suggestions (in chat).
- Kate McMichael – What is The Nature Conservancy relationship, or do they have a relationship with small woodland owners? Is this something that we are connected with?
- Glenn Ahrens – Having Jeff Gersh come and talk as Kaola suggested, could be valuable, would be an interesting speaker to help talk about the issue of lost family forest or that are going out of private ownership to some other category.
- Wendy Gerlach – Maybe have Jeff Gersh and someone else. Since Jeff is looking at it from maybe having a brand new idea about something to be set up. I think maybe Kaola mentioned The Nature Conservancy because they may have a program that already exists. I can ask Kaola.
- Dave Bugni – When you want to learn something you don't go to one entity, you go to a consultant who can give pros and cons. So, the idea would be to get someone like Clint Bentz who can give an overview of estate planning, family succession, etc. Secondly, what really drives people around their forestlands is money, it would be an interesting discussion to have whether it's a legislator or forest policy analyst to discuss what are the tipping points for when people say "I no longer want to do this".
- Margaret Miller – We were just trained on Ties to the Land by Tammy Cushing, who is the author of that publication. I'm about to be taking her tax course, and I did create a page on the new "Know Your Forest" that is all about succession and forest finances. Oregon Small Woodlands Association did a series on landowner taxes and succession. All of those webinars are on this new page. Trying to capture what we are hearing and put it there so that it is all in one spot for ease of access.
- Wendy Gerlach – See about the topic of Ties to the Land and why it's being rejuvenated right now.
- Glenn Ahrens – It is always there, it's a burning issue. That's why it gets revived. Lauren Grand and Alicia Christiansen are both leaders on this.

- Dave Bugni – Have a discussion on the log markets.
- Kate McMichael – I was thinking to tagging on to what Glenn was saying, that compliance monitoring report we got, I think there are more pieces to pick out of that. It could be an interesting topic to look at reforestation issues and what could drive a seeming noncompliance.
- Glenn Ahrens – The one thing I mentioned was the OSU study I am involved in The Landowner Experience After fire. We have Kara Baylog is the coordinator doing a lot of the work on that. Could be an OSU contingent on that. Also talked about American Forests, they gotten involved in the recovery around the fires in Southeast Oregon. That may be of interest as well. Brian Kittler or Brian Morris are involved but that's more big picture.
- Heather Hendersen to look into the contacts to get presentations for the next meeting.
- Mike Kroon to look into the compliance and noncompliance piece.
- Wendy Gerlach – Maurizio had previously mentioned to have a presentation on the stewardship economy. The economy of stewardship beyond and novel sources of revenue. In particular he was talking about biomass and looking to the future as far as different management styles and he mentioned Nils Christoffersen of Wallowa Resources to possibly talk about that.
- Margaret Miller (in chat) - There is also a Biomass Utilization Working Group that is being led by Parametrix. Wallowa Resources is on that group.

Roundtable.

- Kate McMichael – Wanted to mention some dates of things. Associated Oregon Loggers, their convention is this coming Friday and Saturday. Our Oregon Women in Timber Annual Auction is February 19th. Logging Conference is the 20th through the 22nd. March 6th Oregon Small Woodlands Association is having a lobby day. The Family Forest Convention is June 19th to the 21st. One of the things Oregon Tree Farm System is looking at right now is some kind of program to reach out to the under 10 acre folks. When or do we ever update our information on the Committee For Family Forestlands page? Is there a process for any of those updates? I had invited the Board to come to our property if they wanted a tour, and I have been in touch with Mike and Wendy to do it formally. Just still putting that out there.
- Glenn Ahrens – Tree School Clackamas is a big thing coming for us. It is all set, the catalog is out and in the mail to landowners and is also online. The extension forestry natural resources group we have a big statewide planning process and try and boil down what are the big issues we can work on together. I am hosting that meeting in Clackamas this summer in July. Will likely be communicating with some of you on this. The planning session will be 5 days, we revised the planning process to get it all done in one long session. Lots of fun things going on at Hopkins Demonstration Forest. We have a Train the Trainer Program around big leaf maple sap and syrup production that begins at the end of the month.